

Statement:

I support Bill 514 prohibiting the harvesting of Horseshoe crabs in the State of Connecticut for the following reasons:

1. Horseshoe crabs are not needed as a bait source for whelk. Any source of protein will work to attract eels or Whelk. One very successful fisherman I know uses roadkill. The reason they use HS crabs is that it is a free source And easily attainable.
2. There are synthetic replacements for horseshoe crab blood called Recombinant Factor C (developed by Eli Lilly) and they have been used for the last 15 years.
3. I have been involved in tagging HS crabs for Project Limulus for (3 years.) I have witnessed a sharp decline in the number of Horseshoe Crabs spawning on both beaches I have monitored in Guilford on both Daniel Avenue Trolley Road. I have spoken to and witnessed the permitted harvester take 250 and more crabs each moon cycle. He takes them just as they are trying to lay eggs. The very time we need them to be left alone to reproduce. It takes the HS crab 10 years to reach sexual maturity. Harvesting at that time wipes out the breeders of the species. How can we expect them to sustain their population. .
4. Reviewing Dr. Jennifer Mattei's (Project Limulus) it is evident that the HS crab population is not recovering as it optimistically was anticipated, it is time to shut down all harvesting in hopes that we can reverse the damage done or at least do no more harm.

The crabs are in trouble and the time to help them is now.

Thank you,
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